Myanmar relations were totally unfounded and hoped that the Indian Government would take necessary measures to prevent recurrence of such statements so as to facilitate the sound and smooth growth of Sino-Indian relations.

Government's policy is to develop a friendly, co-operative, good neighbourly and mutually beneficial relationship with China, our largest neighbour. We see our relationship as one in which the two sides would be responsive to each other's concerns. We remain committed to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences.

Impact of Ghauri Missile on South Asian Diplomacy

201. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA:
SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a)what has been the impact of Pakistan's success in developing Ghauri Missile on the peace of South Asian Region in general and India in particular; and

(b)in what manner Government propose to react thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) and (b) India is concerned about Pakistan's missile programme and its impact on the region's security. We are aware of consistent outside support to Pakistan in this field despite the existence of multilateral export control regimes, unilateral declarations of restraint and supply restrictions in supplier countries. Government remains fully committed to taking all necessary steps to effectively safeguard India's security and national interests.

Test firing of Ghauri Missile by Pak

202. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report appearing in the Indian Express of April 7, 1998 to the effect that Pakistan has successfully test-fired a 1500 km Missile (Ghauri) on April 6, 1998;

(b)if so, what is Government's assessment about its fire range and the vulnerability caused to India's defence thereby; and

(c)what is Government's reaction thereto by way of raising matching defences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) Yes, madam. Government have seen press reports about the officially claimed test firing of an intermediate range missile by Pakistan.

(b)It is assessed that Pakistan has acquired missile capability of at least a range of 800 kms.

Government closely monitors all developments including those relating to Pakistan's missile programme. India is deeply concerned over Pakistan's missile programme and its impact on the region's security. Government of India is committed to taking all necessary steps to effectively safeguard its security and national interests in accordance with its own threat perceptions.

Statement of Pakistani Nuclear Scientist regarding Pak Missiles

203. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a)whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reported statement of the Pakistani Nuclear Scientist Mr. Abdul Qadeer Khan appearing in the Pioneer of April 16, 1998, denying that Pakistan had acquired foreign technology for Ghauri and claiming that Pakistan had a series of such missiles at different stages of development, and could shortly produce even more powerful missiles;

(b)if so, whether Government have reviewed its missiles and nuclear programme and policy in view thereof; and

(c)if so, what is the outcome?